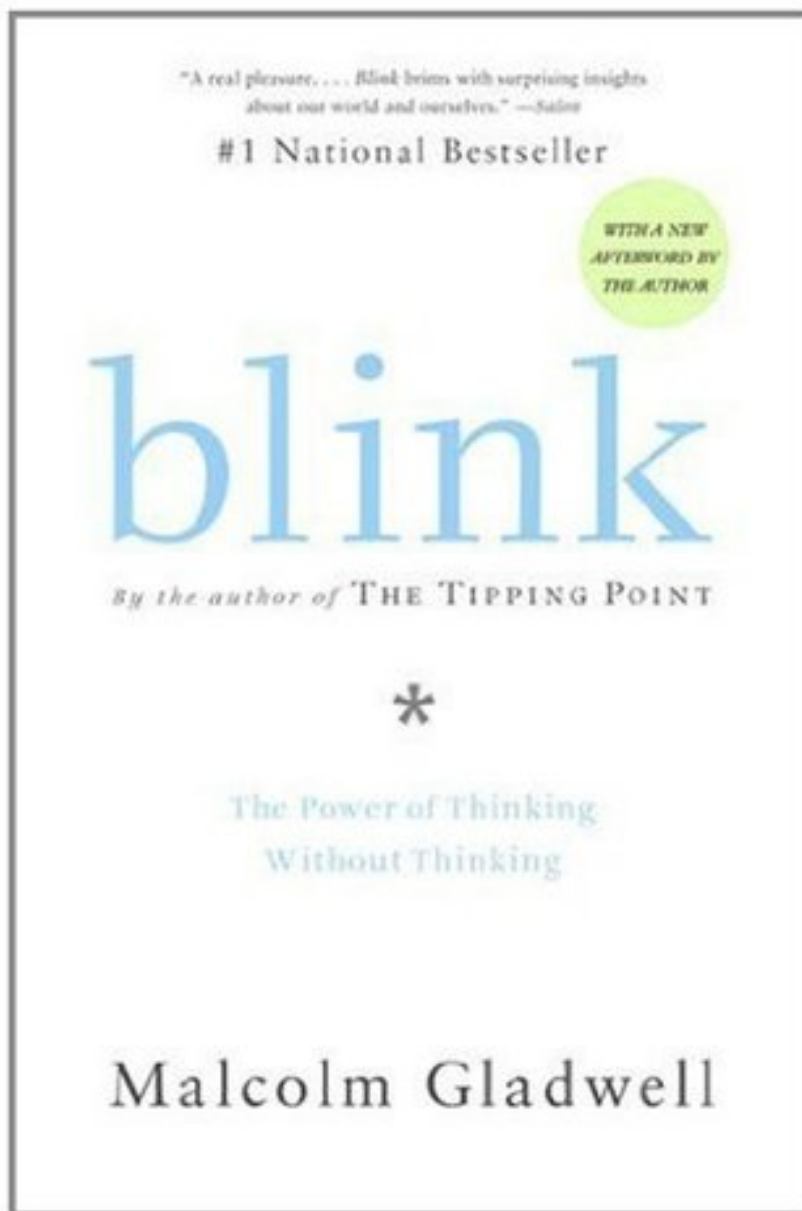


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**By:
Malcolm Gladwell**

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What people Say:

Matt Kosinski

Here's Blink in a nutshell:

Split decisions can be good; better than decisions where we take a lot of time to carefully weigh our options and use scientific evidence.

Except when they're not.

Rapid cognition is an exciting and powerful way to use your brain's quick, intuitive capabilities to make stunningly accurate decisions, and can even lead you to have better success in sports, business and politics.

Except when it won't.

We should learn to trust our snap judgments, even in seemingly complex si

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Nina

For anyone who is thinking about reading this book, I highly recommend it. However, I also recommend reading it as a series of fascinating, well-told stories. It is really nothing more and nothing less.

One of the criticisms I heard about this book before I read it is that Gladwell lays out his theory in the first chapter, and the rest of the book is just example after example supporting his theory. I agree, however it would be a serious mistake to only read the first chapter. The pleasure of rea

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One of the criticisms I heard about this book before I read it is that Gladwell lays out his theory in the first chapter, and the rest of the book is just example after example supporting his theory. I agree, however it would be a serious mistake to only read the first chapter. The pleasure of reading this book is in those stories- he talks about interesting psychological experiments and unbelievable examples of where snap judgement trumped long and careful research and analysis, and where snap judgement failed because of unconscious prejudices. The problem with this book is that his argument is not cohesive.

I kept reading on and on expecting his argument to become clear, but that never happens. Instead, one story after another contradicts his original theory, and he keeps changing his mind about what that theory is. For example, a point he makes is that someone's intuition can lead to the right conclusion, while deliberate analysis by experts considering all information available can be completely off. However, in all his stories where someone made a good snap judgement, that person was an expert and was able to use his judgement under a high-stress situation precisely because of his long career of careful study or of many experiences in that situation. Another problem is that he seems to think that one can know ahead of time when to use their snap judgement or when to carefully research something and consider all information available. The problem with that part of his argument is that, in all the examples where the person's snap judgement failed, that person was not aware of his subconscious prejudices because they were, obviously, subconscious. In the afterward he wrote after the book was published, he tried to reconcile these contradictions, but it was still not convincing.

Regardless, his examples really are fascinating, and he really is a great story-teller. I think if you read this book without the expectations that I had, and without trying to mentally place each example in a larger framework of what you think his argument is, you would very much enjoy it.

Sanjay Gautam

is- what all the stories, case studies, and arguments add up to- an attempt to understand the magical and mysterious thing called Judgement. Its basic premise is: split second decisions (snap judgements); how they can be good and bad.

Gladwell suggests split-seconds decisions are better than the decisions where we take considerable time to weigh our choices and options. He points out that our mind figure things, people, et al. in a blink of an eye. And it is often that these snap judgeme

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Gladwell suggests split-seconds decisions are better than the decisions where we take considerable time to weigh our choices and options. He points out that our mind figure things, people, et al. in a blink of an eye. And it is often that these snap judgements are much more trustworthy than judgements arrived at rationally. But he does not stop here and goes on further: snap judgements can be misleading, too; he termed it Warren Harding error. He suggested that there are some instinctive processes that prevent us to see clearly; and hence cloud our judgements.

Blink is an interesting read. It is very well written, and at the same time engages your attention from the start. And writing is reader friendly, perfectly suitable for a layman.

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I bought this book because I was intrigued by the subtitle of the book: The Power Of Thinking Without Thinking. This subtitle was something Zen like, I felt. And when I read it initially, three years ago, I found it resembling with Zen teachings (and koans). Following are two quotes that mainly convey the spirit:

Doc Opp

As an empirical psychologist by training, I get very annoyed at journalists who simplify things to the point that its no longer even remotely accurate. Such is the case for Blink. This is especially annoying to me, because the book describes my area of research specialization. If you're interested

in a fun read, Gladwell is certainly an engaging author. If you're looking for something that accurately describes the research, I'd recommend looking elsewhere.

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For example, Scott Plous's "the psychology of judgment and decision making" (which, despite the title, is not textbook like), or the Heath brothers' "Made to stick".

Margaret Ross

I think this book wins my prize for Most Easily Misinterpreted to Serve Personal Agendas. Gladwell gets so into the interesting details of the case he's building, he really doesn't emphasize the final conclusions of the book at all, leaving people to think that the interesting details are the whole point, which is unfortunate. But then again, I'm not 100% sure I got the whole point.

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Most of the folks I know think that this book is about how a person's gut instincts can be a better read of a situation than a read based on thorough study. Which is an idea that most people love, since they don't want to have to do all that boring study anyhow. What's missing from that analysis is that Gladwell later insists (but only at the very end of the book, and almost in passing) that it's the thorough active training and study of a subject that allow a person to have "true" or "correct" gut reads. The guy who can tell who's getting divorced after 60 seconds of hearing them talk spent years coding verbal and physical cues in couples, studying them intensely for years before he was able to give his 60 second analysis. The art historians were drawing on a vast body of knowledge when they made their judgment about the statue. The cop who read fear instead of aggression and didn't shoot couldn't name what he was seeing, but he'd seen it before. Then he also says that our gut reactions can be easily colored by training we don't even know is there- our prejudices, whether unknown or unacknowledged- influence or reads of a situation as well.

Ultimately, I saw this book as a reaction to and analysis of the Amadou Diallo killing in 1999, with some tips for how to avoid such future tragedies. In that light, I thought it was interesting and even constructive, but only if you pay close attention to the last chapter.